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*No comment
 in other
 countries?*
FILE

7/6

EFFECT WITHIN CHINA AND OTHER ASIATIC
 COUNTRIES OF UNITED STATES "BACKING"
 OF CHIANG KAI-SHEK

File, January

The analysis called for is flexible as to time in that the period to be surveyed is not defined. It is flexible also with respect to degree, as the extent of "backing" is not indicated in the question. The following discussion will, therefore, be divided into sections according to time and degree of "backing".

China

Before entering upon the analysis, it should also be observed that the question calls for a discussion of the "backing" of Chiang Kai-shek and does not raise the question of United States support of an alternative authority on Formosa or of other non-Communist elements in Hong Kong and elsewhere.

The Present

We are now "backing" Chiang Kai-shek. We deal with him diplomatically, militarily and through ECA channels as the head of the Chinese National Government on Formosa. We cannot significantly expand the degree of our "backing" to him during the present period simply because we are, to all intents and purposes, "backing" him now to the full. An increase of our "backing" will take time to effectuate and will be discussed in subsequent sections of this paper.

China - Political

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EFFECT WITHIN CHINA AND OTHER ASIATIC
COUNTRIES OF UNITED STATES "BACKING"
OF CHIANG KAI-SHEK

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The effect of this "backing" within China--that is the mainland of China--should be discussed in three categories-- the effect on (1) the dominant Stalinist faction of the Peiping regime, (2) the potential dissenting element

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element within the regime (i.e., the so-called "patriotic" Communists, and the large number of former Nationalists who went over to the Communists and are now collaborating with them), and (3) the great mass of Chinese people.

The effect of our "backing" Chiang is to the Stalinists a welcome one. It is satisfying confirmation in their minds that their Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist analysis of our policy has been correct. They welcome our present policy with respect to Chiang also because it is a useful propaganda symbol with which to synthesize revolutionary spirit and to foster, at the behest of and to the advantage of the Kremlin, the "hate America" campaign. They are dissatisfied with this policy only in so far as we have not gone somewhat further in "backing" Chiang Kai-shek.

With respect to the dissenters in the regime, they view our "backing" of Chiang with dismay. They are the element which would follow an independent Chinese policy, probably Marxist-Leninist in operation (although not necessarily so), but resistant to Soviet efforts to control China. In their minds, so long as the United States "backs" solely the man who was their primary enemy in a long and bitter civil war, they have no alternative but to maintain solidarity with the Stalinists in leaning to the Soviet side.

As for the common people, there is still fresh in their memories the fact that American "backing" of Chiang from 1945 to 1949 was not only a failure but also meant a prolongation of civil war and, therefore, of their miseries.

miseries. Their attitude toward Chiang and American "backing" of him has, however, with important exceptions, been modified by their discovery that the Communists are harder taskmasters than Chiang. Given the attitude of the American Government on Chinese affairs, the average Chinese realizes that the only salvation from his present torment is Chiang. This does not mean that he wholeheartedly yearns for liberation by a Chiang-United States combination.

By now the Chinese are probably the most disillusioned of all people. They never have entertained any serious illusions that those who ruled them did so for the public benefit. Their experiences during the past 40 years have confirmed them in this outlook. They were "liberated" first by the Republican revolution from the Manchu dynasty, then by the Kuomintang revolution from the war lords of the Republic, then by the Japanese from an insignificant Comintern threat, then by Chiang and the Americans from the Japanese, and finally by the Communists from Chiang. Therefore, most Chinese probably now look at United States "backing" of Chiang with the hope of one seeking to leap from a fire with only a return to the frying pan in sight.

Some Six Months Hence

The future is more than usually obscure, particularly in the Far East. It is dynamic and four dimensional and as such it defies adequate description. It is perhaps sufficient to point out that the future effect within

China

China of our "backing" of Chiang Kai-shek turns not only on the degree to which we "back" him but also upon what transpires within China, Korea and elsewhere--and that these factors will all interact on one another.

Crucial in this projection are the intentions of the Kremlin and Peiping with respect to the conflict in Korea. These in turn are affected by their estimate of our intentions. We have neither made ours clear nor have we privately endeavored to find out what theirs are. Until we do both we shall not know whether the Korean conflict is likely to mushroom into World War III or be susceptible of solution through negotiations.

Having said this by way of background, it is evident that the question of future "backing" Chiang can be discussed in only the most speculative and tentative terms.

Let us first consider the continuation of our "backing" of Chiang at approximately the present level.

If there is no enlargement of hostilities in the Far East, including an attack on Formosa, the effect on the mainland Chinese will probably continue as about at present.

However, if there is an attempted invasion of Formosa or the conflict in Korea spills over so as to involve United States military action against China, prognostication becomes a most uncertain enterprise. We may assume that the Stalinists in these circumstances would probably be gratified. The United States would have become involved in a diversionary action, an action alarming and distasteful to the great majority of its allies. A serious rift would

would be created in the solidarity of the Free World and the United States effectively isolated from its allies. While China would be severely punished in the process, the United States probably could not impose a decision on the Communist regime. And if the U.S.S.R. is seeking to precipitate World War III in a political and moral context most favorable to itself, this would be it. The Stalinists would, however, have certain anxieties about such a situation, anxieties relating to possible actions by the dissenters within the regime.

The dissenting elements, the so-called patriotic Communists and the non-Communist collaborators, would find this situation a severe test. They would feel impelled either to line up solidly with the Stalinists in resistance to "foreign aggression" or to attempt a break. The fact that we were "backing" Chiang would make it difficult for most of them to revolt. Their problem would be where they could turn to for allies without deep loss of face.

The majority of the Chinese people would be torn between hope and despair. They would endure the initial attritive air and naval action with resignation so long as they thought that it was a prelude to the defeat of their Communist rulers. But they would be galvanized into active and organized action against the Communists and in support of Chiang only if our attritive assaults were accompanied or quickly followed by Chinese political leadership with a program which captured their allegiance. There has thus far been no indication that these will or
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can be forthcoming from the Generalissimo. However, a successful revolt within the Communist camp or the development of a new non-Communist leadership outside of China would provide leadership and ideological motivation for popular resistance to Peiping. In default of these, Stalinists propaganda may be expected to take effect in the popular mind and the masses be turned against the United States and in support of the Peiping regime.

Let us now turn to an examination of the reaction of our "backing" Chiang in the event that we expand the support given to him.

As it is impossible to treat this question with any precision, there would be little value in attempting to distinguish the varying degrees of "backing" lying between our present course and one of full support (short of commitment of American ground forces). What follows, therefore, is a rough estimate of the effect within China of what is loosely described as "all-out backing".

In the event that there is no expansion of hostilities in the Far East, such "backing" would be exploited by the Stalinists as conclusive evidence of aggressive American intent against China. Peiping's dependence on the U.S.S.R. would be furthered, as the Chinese Communists would feel it necessary to undertake preparations to meet what they would regard as a growing threat to the security of East China.

The dissenting element would become increasingly more discouraged because it would appear evident to them
that

that there could be utterly no hope of getting out of their present blind alley.

The common people would assume that our expanded "backing" was preparation for an attempted invasion by Chiang with our support. In the absence of political preparation they would await with resigned and cautious hope for the battle between their present and past masters for the right to rule over them.

Should hostilities be widened to include China, and as a result we not only attacked the mainland by air and naval action but also put the Generalissimo's forces ashore, the Stalinists would probably follow a strategy of a long, wearing war in which they would rely on tactics of withdrawal and counter-offensive. They would undoubtedly lay great stress on the political phases of the war, on attempts to mobilize the population on their side and to subvert Chiang's forces. They would make much of allegations that Chiang's troops and irregulars were puppets and mercenaries of a foreign "aggressor". And again, if the Chinese Stalinists and their Kremlin masters are seeking to create a situation most favorable to their precipitating World War III, this would be it.

The dissenters within the Communist regime would probably feel that they had no alternative but to align themselves solidly with the Stalinists. Some, to be sure, might defect, but they would not be in significant numbers. The war would before long become for them, as

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for the Stalinists, a "great patriotic" war, which they would fight with extreme tenacity and flexibility, relying on the Kremlin not to permit them to be extinguished as a regime.

Unless Chiang is able to produce a platform and mass leadership, the people would have tepid enthusiasm for the return of his troops to the mainland. There would, of course, be the outward manifestations of welcome--the average Chinese has a flag and a welcoming speech suitable for every situation likely to be visited upon him. But unless the campaign were quickly victorious--and there is reason to doubt that the troops under the command of the Generalissimo, even with American air and naval support, could rapidly defeat the far larger Communist forces--the effect of our attritive action would before long begin to backfire politically on us and on the Generalissimo's forces. If our air action approached the degree of destructive excellence which it has in North Korea, the common people of China would probably turn in revulsion against those causing the carnage and loss of property which they would suffer. This would be a crucially important development because in the long dragging type of war which the Communists would fight, whoever captures the support of the mass of people has a tremendous advantage in the long haul of the struggle.

More Than Six Months Hence

Of the period which lies more than several months ahead it is impossible to speak intelligently excepting in terms

terms of speculative projections of what has already been said. Especially is this so when we have no idea of the Kremlin's and Peiping's intentions. If we will bestir ourselves sufficiently to explore these intentions through private feelers regarding Korea, we may obtain sufficient information to make further estimates worth while.